

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**  
**STATE OF GEORGIA**  
**DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM**  
**CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTABILITY**

The purpose of this special provision is to establish criteria for acceptability of DBE firms for work performed on this contract. The intent is to ensure all participation counted toward fulfillment of the DBE goals is (1) real and substantial, (2) actually performed by viable, independent DBE owned firms, and (3) in accordance with the spirit of the applicable laws and regulations.

The policy of the Georgia Department of Transportation is to ensure compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 49 Code of Federal Register, Part 26 and related statutes and regulations in all program activities.

To this end the Georgia Department of Transportation shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex or national origin in the award, administration and performance of any Georgia Department of Transportation assisted contract or in the administration of its Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program. The Georgia Department of Transportation shall take all necessary and reasonable steps to ensure nondiscrimination.

DBE payments and commitments for Federal-aid projects shall be separate and distinct and cannot be transferred or combined in any matter.

The DBE Goal specified in the contract will be a percentage representing the DBE Race Conscious Participation. The Contractor will strive to achieve an additional percentage in his/her contracts for all projects during the course of the current State Fiscal Year, in order to meet the overall Georgia Department of Transportation DBE goal.

**DBE DIRECTORY:** The Department has available a directory or source list to facilitate identifying DBEs with capabilities relevant to general contracting requirements and to particular solicitations. The Department will make the directory available to bidders and proposers in their efforts to meet the DBE requirements. The directory or listing includes firms which the Department has certified to be eligible DBEs in accordance with 49 CFR Part 26.

**GOAL FOR PARTICIPATION:** If a percentage goal for DBE participation in this contract is set forth elsewhere in this proposal, the Contractor shall complete the DBE GOALS Form included in the proposal. The Contractor is encouraged to make every effort to achieve the goal set by the Department. However, if the Contractor cannot find sufficient DBE participants to meet the goal established by the Department, the Department will consider for award a proposal with less participation than the established goal if:

- (A) The bidder can demonstrate no greater participation could be obtained. This should be well documented by demonstrating the Contractor's actions through good faith efforts.

The following is a list of types of actions which the Department will consider as part of the Contractor's good faith efforts to obtain DBE participation. This is not intended to be a mandatory checklist nor intended to be exclusive or exhaustive. Other factors or types of efforts may be relevant in appropriate cases.

- (1) Soliciting through all reasonable and available means (e.g. attendance at pre-bid meetings, advertising and/or written notices) the interest of all certified DBEs who have the capability to perform the work of the contract. The Contractor must solicit this interest within sufficient time to allow the DBEs to respond to the solicitation. The Contractor must determine with certainty if the DBEs are interested by taking appropriate steps to follow up initial solicitations.
- (2) Selecting portions of the work to be performed by DBEs in order to increase the likelihood the DBE goals will be achieved. This includes, where appropriate, breaking out contract work items into economically feasible units to facilitate

DBE participation, even when the Contractor might otherwise prefer to perform these work items with its own forces.

- (3) Providing interested DBEs with adequate information about the plans, specifications, and requirements of the contract in a timely manner to assist DBEs participants in responding to a solicitation.
- (4) (a) Negotiating in good faith with interested DBEs.

Contractor(s) are responsible to make a portion of the work available to DBE subcontractors and suppliers and to select those portions of the work or material needs consistent with the available DBE subcontractors and suppliers, so as to facilitate DBE participation. Evidence of such negotiation includes the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of DBEs that were considered; a description of the information provided regarding the plans and specifications for the work selected for subcontracting; and evidence as to why additional agreements could not be reached for DBEs to perform the work.
- (b) Contractor(s) using good business judgment would consider a number of factors in negotiating with subcontractors, including DBE subcontractors, and would take a firm's price and capabilities as well as contract goals into consideration. However, the fact there may be some additional costs involved in finding and using DBEs is not in itself sufficient reason for a bidder's failure to meet the contract DBE goal, as long as such costs are reasonable. Also, the ability or desire of a Contractor to perform the work of a contract with its own organization does not relieve the Contractor of the responsibility to make good faith efforts. Contractors are not, however, required to accept higher quotes from DBEs if the price difference is excessive or unreasonable.
- (5) Not rejecting DBEs as being unqualified without sound reasons based on a thorough investigation of their capabilities. The

Contractor's standing within its industry, membership in specific groups, organizations, or associations and political or social affiliations (for example union vs. nonunion employee status) are not legitimate causes for the rejection or non solicitation of bids in the Contractor's efforts to meet the project goal.

- (6) Making efforts to assist interested DBEs in obtaining bonding, lines of credit, or insurance as required by the contractor.
  - (7) Making efforts to assist interested DBEs in obtaining necessary equipment, supplies, materials, or related assistance or services.
  - (8) Effectively using the services of available minority/women community organizations; minority/women Contractors' groups; local, state, and Federal minority/women business assistance offices; and other organizations as allowed on a case-by-case basis to provide assistance in the recruitment and placement of DBE's.
- (B) The participation proposed by the low bidder is not substantially less than the participation proposed by the other bidders on the same contract.

If no percentage goal is set forth in the proposal, the contractor may enter a proposed DBE participation. This voluntary DBE participation will count as race neutral DBE participation. Prime Contractor shall report race-neutral participation in accordance with the DBE Monthly Report requirements shown in this document.

To be eligible for award of this contract,

All bidders will be required to submit the following information to the Department by the close of business on the 3<sup>rd</sup> working day following opening of the bid as a matter of bidder responsibility.

- (1) The names and addresses of DBE firms committed to participate in the Contract;
- (2) A description of the work each DBE will perform;
- (3) The dollar amount of the participation of each DBE firm participating;
- (4) Written documentation of the bidder's commitment to use a DBE subcontractor whose participation it submits to meet a contract goal;

- (5) Written confirmation from the DBE committed to participating in the contract, as provided in the prime contractor's commitment.
- (6) If the contract goal is not met, evidence of good faith efforts must be provided.

Failure by a bidder to furnish the above information may subject the bid to disqualification. Also failure by the bidder to submit satisfactory evidence of good faith efforts may subject the bid to disqualification.

Award of a contract by the Department to a Prime Contractor who has listed DBE participants with the bid may not constitute final approval by the Department of the listed DBE. The Department reserves the right to approve or disapprove a Disadvantaged firm after a review of the Disadvantaged firm's proposal participation. Payment to the Contractor under the contract may be withheld until final approval of the listed DBEs is granted by the Department.

If the Contractor desires to substitute a DBE in lieu of those listed in the proposal, a letter of concurrence shall be required from the listed DBE prior to approval of the substitution, unless this requirement is waived by the Department.

Agreements between bidder and a DBE in which promises not to provide Subcontracting quotations to other bidders are prohibited.

**DEFINITION:** For the purposes of this provision, the following definitions will apply:

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise or DBE means a for-profit small business concern –

- (1) Ensuring at least 51 percent owned by one or more individuals who are both socially and economically disadvantaged or, in the case of a corporation, in which 51 percent of the stock is owned by one or more such individuals; and
- (2) Whose management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more of the socially and economically disadvantaged individuals who own the business.

Good Faith Efforts means efforts to achieve a DBE goal or other requirement of this part which, by their scope, intensity, and appropriateness to the objective, can reasonably be expected to fulfill the program requirement.

Joint Venture means an association of a DBE firm and one or more other firms to carry out a single, for-profit business enterprise, for which the parties combine their property, capital, efforts, skills and knowledge, and in which the DBE is responsible for a distinct, clearly defined portion of the work of the contract and whose share in the capital contribution, control, management, risks, and profits of the joint venture are commensurate with its ownership interest.

Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Individual means any individual who is a citizen (or lawfully admitted permanent resident) of the United States and who is –

- (1) Any individual who the Department finds to be a socially and economically disadvantaged individual on a case-by-case basis.
- (2) Any individual in the following groups, members of which are reputably presumed to be socially and economically disadvantaged.
  - (i) “Black Americans,” which includes persons having origins, in any of the Black racial groups of Africa;
  - (ii) “Hispanic Americans,” which includes persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Dominican, Central or South American, or other Spanish or Portuguese culture or origin, regardless of race;
  - (iii) “Native Americans,” which includes persons who are American Indians, Eskimos, Aleuts, or Native Hawaiians;
  - (iv) “Asian-Pacific Americans,” which includes persons whose origins are from Japan, China, Taiwan, Korea, Burma (Myanmar), Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia (Kampuchea), Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Brunei, Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands (Republic of Palau), the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, Macao, Fiji, Tonga, Kiribati, Juvalu, Nauru, Federated States of Micronesia, or Hong Kong;
  - (v) “Subcontinent Asian Americans,” which includes persons whose origins are from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, the Maldives Islands, Nepal or Sri Lanka;
  - (vi) Women;
  - (vii) Any additional groups whose members are designated as socially and economically disadvantaged by the SBA, at such time as the

SBA designation becomes effective.

- (3) GDOT will presume that such persons are socially and economically disadvantaged only to the extent permitted by applicable federal law.

Race-conscious measure is one focused specifically on assisting only DBEs, including women-owned DBEs.

Race-neutral measure is one being, or can be, used to assist all small businesses. For the purposes of this part, race-neutral includes gender-neutrality.

**DISCRIMINATION PROHIBITED:** No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise discriminated against in connection with the award and performance of this contract on the grounds of race, color, sex or national origin.

The following assurance becomes a part of this contract and must be included in and made a part of each subcontract the prime contractor enters into with their subcontractors (49 CFR 26.13):

“The contractor, and/or subcontractor shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex in the performance of this contract. The contractor shall carry out applicable requirements of 49 CFR Part 26 in the award and administration of DOT – assisted contracts. Failure by the contractor to carry out these requirements is (breach) of this contract which may result in the termination of this contract or such other remedy as the Department deems appropriate.

**Failure to Achieve Requirements:** Periodic reviews shall be made by the Department to determine the extent of compliance with the requirements set forth in this provision. If the Contractor is found to be in noncompliance, further payments for any work performed may be withheld until corrective action is taken. If corrective action is not taken, it may result in termination of this contract.

Participation will be counted toward fulfillment of the DBE goal as follows:

- (A) When a DBE participates in a contract, the Contractor counts only the value of the work actually performed by the DBE toward DBE goals.
- (1) Count the entire amount of the portion of a construction contract (or other contract not covered by paragraph (A) (2) of this section) performed by the DBE's own forces. Include the cost of supplies and materials obtained by the DBE for the work of the contract, including supplies purchased or equipment leased by the DBE (except supplies and equipment the DBE subcontractor purchases or leases from the prime contractor or its affiliate).
  - (2) Count the entire amount of fees or commissions charged by a DBE firm for providing a bona fide service, such as professional, technical consultant, or managerial services, or for providing bonds or insurance specifically required for the performance of a DOT-assisted contract, toward DBE goals, provided the Department determines the fee is reasonable and not excessive as compared with fees customarily allowed for similar services.
  - (3) When a DBE subcontracts part of the work of its contract to another firm, the value of the subcontracted work may be counted toward DBE goals only if the DBE's subcontractor is itself a DBE. Work that a DBE subcontracts to a non-DBE firm does not count toward DBE goals.
- (B) When a DBE performs as a participant in a joint venture, count a portion of the total dollar value of the contract equal to the distinct, clearly defined portion of the work of the contract the DBE performs with own forces toward DBE goals.
- (C) Count expenditures to a DBE contractor toward DBE goals only if the DBE is performing a commercially useful function on that contract.
- (1) A DBE performs a commercially useful function when responsible for execution of the work of the contract and carrying out responsibilities by actually performing, managing, and supervising the work involved. To perform a commercially useful function, the DBE must also be responsible,



with respect to materials and supplies used on the contract, for negotiating price, determining quality and quantity, ordering the material, and installing (where applicable) and paying for the material itself.

- (2) A DBE does not perform a commercially useful function if their role is limited to being an extra participant in a transaction, contract, or project through which funds are passed in order to obtain the appearance of DBE participation.
  - (3) If a DBE does not perform or exercise responsibility for at least 30 percent of the total cost of their contract with their own work force, or the DBE subcontracts a greater portion of the work of a contract than would be expected on the basis of normal industry practice for the type of work involved, the Department will presume the DBE is not performing a commercially useful function.
  - (4) When a DBE is presumed not to be performing a commercially useful function as provided in paragraph (C) (3) of this section, the DBE may present evidence to rebut this presumption.
  - (5) The Department's decisions on commercially useful function matters are subject to review by the US DOT, but are administratively appealable to the US DOT.
- (D) The following factors are to be used in determining whether a DBE trucking company is performing a commercially useful function:
- (1) The DBE must be responsible for the management and supervision of the entire trucking operation for which they are responsible on a particular contract, and there cannot be a contrived arrangement for the purpose of meeting DBE goals.
  - (2) The DBE must itself own and operate at least one fully licensed, insured, and operational truck used on the contract.
  - (3) The DBE receives credit for the total value of the transportation services it provides on the contract using trucks it owns, insures, and operates using drivers it employs.
  - (4) The DBE may lease trucks from another DBE firm, including an owner/operator who is certified as a DBE. The DBE who leases trucks

from another DBE receives credit for the total value of the transportation services the lessee DBE provided on the contract.

- (5) The DBE may also lease trucks from a non-DBE and is entitled to credit only for the fee or commission it receives as a result of the lease arrangement. The DBE does not receive credit for the total value of the transportation services provided by the lessee, since these services are not provided by a DBE.
  - (6) For purposes of this paragraph (D), a lease must indicate the DBE has exclusive use of and control over the truck. This does not preclude the leased truck from working for others during the term of the lease with the consent of the DBE, so long as the lease gives the DBE absolute priority for use of the leased truck. Leased trucks must display the name and identification number of the DBE.
- (E) Count expenditures with DBEs for materials or supplies toward DBE goals as provided in the following:
- (1) (i) If the materials or supplies are obtained from a DBE manufacturer, count 100 percent of the cost of the materials or supplies toward DBE goals.
    - (ii) For purposes of this paragraph, a manufacturer is a firm that operates or maintains a factory or establishment that produces, on the premises, the materials, supplies, articles, or equipment required under the contract and of the general character described by the specifications.
  - (2) (i) If the materials or supplies are obtained from a DBE regular dealer, count 60 percent of the cost of the materials or supplies toward DBE goals.
    - (ii) For purposes of this section, a regular dealer is a firm owning, operating, or maintaining a store, warehouse, or other establishment in which the materials, supplies, articles or equipment of the general character described by the specifications and required under the contract are bought, kept in stock, and regularly sold or leased to the public in the usual course of business.

- (A) To be a regular dealer, the firm must be an established, regular business engaging, as its principal business and under its own name, in the purchase and sale or lease of the products in question.
  - (B) A person may be a regular dealer in such bulk items as petroleum products, steel, cement, gravel, stone, or asphalt without owning, operating, or maintaining a place of business as provided in this paragraph **(E)(2)(ii)** if the person both owns and operates distribution equipment for the products. Any supplementing of regular dealers' own distribution equipment shall be by a long-term lease agreement and not on an ad hoc or contract-by-contract basis.
  - (C) Packagers, brokers, manufacturers' representatives, or other persons who arrange or expedite transactions are not regular dealers within the meaning of this paragraph **(E)(2)**.
- (3) With respect to materials or supplies purchased from a DBE which is neither a manufacturer nor a regular dealer, count the entire amount of fees or commissions charged for assistance in the procurement of the materials and supplies, or fees or transportation charges for the delivery of materials or supplies required on a job site, toward DBE goals, provided you determine the fees to be reasonable and not excessive as compared with fees customarily allowed for similar services. Do not count any portion of the cost of the materials and supplies themselves toward DBE goals, however.
  - (4) Do not count the participation of a DBE subcontractor toward the prime contractor's DBE achievements until the amount being counted toward the goal has been paid to the DBE.
  - (5) No participation will be counted not in compliance with Special Provision entitled "Criteria for Acceptability" which is a part of this contract or with any provisions included in 49 CFR Part 26.
  - (6) If the contract amount overruns, the contractor will not be required to increase the dollar amount of DBE participation. If the contract amount under runs, the contractor will not be allowed to under run the dollar

amount of DBE participation except when the DBE subcontracted items themselves under run.

## **REPORTS**

A: The contractor shall submit a “DBE Participation Report” on this contract monthly which shall include the following:

1. The name of each DBE participating in the contract.
2. A description of the work to be performed, materials, supplies, and services provided by each DBE.
3. Whether each DBE is a supplier, subcontractor, owner/operator, or other.
4. The dollar value of each DBE subcontract or supply agreement.
5. The actual payment to date of each DBE participating in the contract.
6. The report shall be updated by the Prime Contractor whenever the approved DBE has performed a portion of the work that has been designated for the contract. Copies of this report should be transmitted promptly to the Engineer. Failure to submit the report within 30 calendar days following the end of the month may cause payment to the contractor to be withheld.
7. The Prime Contractor shall notify the Project Engineer at least 24 hours prior to the time the DBE commences working on the project. The DBE must furnish supervision of the DBE portion of the work, and the person responsible for this supervision must report to the Project Engineer when they begin work on the project. They must also inform the Project Engineer when their forces will be doing work on the project.

B. In order to comply with 49 CFR 26.11, the Prime Contractor shall submit documentation regarding all payments made from the Prime to all DBE subcontractors on federal aid projects in the form of copies of cancelled checks or notarized electronic documentation which validates said payments made on the DBE Monthly Participation Reports. This information shall be required monthly and submitted with the DBE Monthly Participation Report.

C. Failure to respond within the time allowed in the request will be grounds for withholding all payments on all Contracts.

**SUBSTITUTION OF DBEs:** The Contractor shall make reasonable efforts to replace a DBE Subcontractor unable to perform work for any reason with another DBE. The Department shall approve all substitutions of Subcontractors in order to ensure the substitute firms are eligible DBEs.

**CERTIFICATION OF DBEs:** To ensure the DBE Program benefits only firms owned and controlled by Disadvantaged Individuals, the Department shall certify the eligibility of DBEs and joint ventures involving DBEs named by bidders.

Questions concerning DBE Certification/Criteria should be directed to the EEO Office at (404) 631-1972.